

The Fire Fighter Gazette

Volume 6

September 1996

1 - Things that go wrong in life are highly predictable; and 2 - If it is predictable, it is preventable.

Inaugural DoD Conference held in KC!

The first annual DoD Fire and Emergency Services Conference was held in conjunction with the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) Conference in Kansas City, Missouri from 24 - 29 August, 1996. By all accounts, it was a terrific success. Several hundred vendors displayed the latest in fire technology at the Bartlett Center while training seminars were held throughout the facility. The DoD seminars included briefings on: The DoD Fire School, DoD Fire Fighter Certification Program, National Fire Service Accreditation, DoD Fire Incident Reporting System, DoD Pay and Classification, DoD Readiness Issues, Local Government Partnership Panel, Environmental Impacts, Union Perspective, and DoD Issues. The President of the IAFC opened the conference, welcoming the DoD attendees. He promptly introduced this year's keynote speaker - Mr. Gordon Graham, a California Highway Patrolman who practices law on the side! The focus on his discussion was centered on civil liability when an incident goes wrong. A very dynamic speaker, he made some good points. For example, from a risk management standpoint, he stated two rules: 1 - Things that go wrong in life are highly predictable; and 2 - If it is predictable, it is preventable. To illustrate his point, he used running a red light as an example - if a fire fighter runs a red light on the way to an emergency, he runs a high risk of getting into an accident. He also gave his seven rules of airline flight - he

(Continued on page 2)



To Contact Us ...

As always, we would like to solicit your articles or questions, so here is how you can get in touch with us: 510 CES/CEF, 6202 Pine Drive, USAF Academy, CO 80840. Our phone numbers are: Commercial: (719) 333-2051, DSN 333-2051, and FAX: (719) 333-3740, DSN 333-3740. If possible, article submissions should include a Word For Windows file on floppy disk. **Please note our new phone numbers!**

Inside this Issue ...

Quality Council Meetings	2/3
Mission Support Plan	4
Short Bursts	5
Promotions	6

Inaugural DoD Conference, con't

doesn't like to fly very much, so he came up with these rules to mitigate his risk: 1 - Don't fly on an airline whose name you cannot pronounce! 2 - Don't fly on an airplane that is made in a country that can't make good automobiles! 3 - Never fly on the first flight in the morning (the engine is cold, the battery may be dead, etc.). 4 - Never sit in an aisle seat - the terrorists always take these people out! 5 - Always sit by the window (while sitting in the middle seat something may drop on you from the overhead compartment). 6 - Always sit one row behind the emergency exit (the emergency exit row's seats don't recline). 7 - Introduce yourself to the pilot (if he appears impaired - GET OFF THE PLANE). Although Mr. Graham used humor to make his point, what he was trying to say was quite profound - *Don't be consequence driven - manage your risk!* Mr. Graham went on to speak about departmental training programs. He stated there are four types of emergencies - High Risk/Low Frequency, High Risk/High Frequency, Low Risk/Low Frequency, and Low Risk/High Frequency. Right off the top he said that there is no need to train for low risk emergencies - our time is too valuable to waste time training for those emergencies that are low risk. That leaves just the two categories of High Risk - but why are we training for those High Risk/High Frequency emergencies? If we are indeed performing these tasks on a regular basis, shouldn't we be proficient already? Having said all of this, the obvious emerges - train for the High Risk/Low Frequency emergencies - pilots don't re-certify by going to the simulator and landing an aircraft in perfect weather conditions! Mr. Graham wrapped up his speech by discussing personnel management and offering his five pillars of success: 1 - Hire good people - ready, willing and able to perform. 2 - Have good organizational policies - make them clear! 3 - Make sure personnel are adequately trained. 4 - Have good supervision - the supervisors should know and enforce policy. 5 - Have good discipline - address problems early - remember ignoring poor behavior encourages future poor behavior.

The next speaker was Chief Warrant Officer Forbes from the DoD Fire School. He briefed that the school had been a true DoD school for a year now, and things were progressing well. The Fire School will be graduating Fire Fighter II students beginning with the first class in January, 97. Mr. Ben Cheek also explained to the group how quotas for courses are distributed and how we can better manage the system. CMSgt Podolske's briefing on the Fire Fighter Certification System was equally informing. Highlights of the briefing included a reminder that the grandfathering phase is over; an excellent video of how to administer the fire fighter certification program is

now available (each base should have a copy); CerTest is now only being distributed on CD-ROM; detailed lesson plans have been distributed to each installation for Fire Fighter II; Certification courses under development include: Fire Officer III and IV, Public Telecommunicator I & II, Wildland Fire Fighter I - IV, Rescue Technician and Shipboard Fire Fighter; the ECI catalog is now on the Web: <http://www.cdsar.af.mil.eci.eci.cattoc.htm> ; Hazmat Support Materials (including the law, lesson plans, and slides) have been distributed to all installations on CD-ROM. CMSgt Podolske finished his briefing by giving an overview of the Certification System, and the different tracks you may take to obtain the various certifications.

Quality Council Meeting

The Fire Protection Quality Council met in conjunction with the DoD Fire and Emergency Services Conference. The following notes are provided from two of those meetings:

26 August 1996

1. A presentation was made by Hyatt Hotels regarding the 1997 IAFC conference to be held in Dallas, Texas. The Sales Manager gave an extensive overview which covered meeting rooms, sleeping rooms and other amenities. The Hotel has 1,325 rooms, 750 of which will be made available to the DoD. Of those rooms, up to twenty suites will be available. The Hotel is right on DFW airport, 30 minutes from the convention center. Free shuttle bus service will be available during the conference.
2. Capt Beatty, Defense Logistics Agency gave a briefing which explained why it is cheaper to purchase commercial off-the-shelf fire vehicles. Typically, the DLA can save the government 14% on any vehicle.
3. Major Tetla (HQ AFCEA) gave a briefing on Halon replacement agents. There are currently four compounds being tested, with the following requirements: the agent must equal the fire fighting capability of Halon 1211; toxicity must be low; and impact on the environment must be negligible. Halon 1301 replacement must meet the same requirements and must be able to be "dropped-into" existing total flood systems.
4. CMSgt Podolske (HQ AFCEA) briefed the group on several training issues. The first issue concerned the electronic testing plan initiative. Under this plan, a student enrolled in the paper-based CDCs for a particular course may opt to take an electronic version of the end of course test (on CerTest). Future plans include electronically transmitting test results back to HQ AFCEA.
5. A short discussion was held regarding elimination rates at the DoD Fire Academy. Current elimination rate in the basic course is 20%. Part of the problem, it was discussed, is a failure to properly screen students entering this career field, and the lack of valid general and mechanical scores required to enter the

(Continued on page 3)

Quality Council Meetings, con't

field initially. Another problem was that recruiters used AFMAN 36-2108 to recruit new accessions. These requirements have less stringent requirements than NFPA 1582 and is causing problems. Although the disparity with vision acuity has been corrected, several other areas have not, and are being worked through the SG community.

6. CMS Podolske led a discussion about live fire training requirements for Airport Fire Fighters. Since so many students graduated Goodfellow without receiving live pit fire training, a plan is being developed to get all of those students up to speed. Regional training centers will be used to send students on a four day training TDY. AFCEA will fund fuel and AFFF for the regional training sites.

7. Mr. Hotell briefed the group on the impending ISO visit to six installations. The contract will be obligated by 15 September; schedules are still being worked for each location.

8. Mr. Hotell discussed the initiative that the vehicle integrated process team (IPT) was working regarding purchasing crash vehicles through Commercial Technology Exploitation (CTE). The goal is to obtain funding for crash vehicles to be purchased from commercial vendors beginning in the year 2000.

9. The civilian uniform AFI is being re-written - no details available yet. POC is Chief Goodbread, Tinker AFB.

10. A brief Fire School discussion was held: The Fire Marshall's Course will come back on line soon - 3 training days. The Fire Officer's Training Course (formerly Advanced Technology, a.k.a. "Fire Chief's Course") is being considered to certify chiefs at the Fire Officer IV level -- the course would be approximately thirty training days. CMS Podolske stated that the Program Review Committee (PRC) must decide if we need this course. Finally, the school will be graduating it's first Fire Fighter II certified students beginning 14 April, 1997. At that point they will need only two Driver/Operator Courses and the Readiness Course at their home station to complete 5-level requirements.

28 August 1996

1. The Quality Council addressed several training issues, especially frequencies. The Council decided to change Live Fire Training to Semi-Annual; Aircraft Familiarization to Quarterly and Aircraft Egress to Semi-Annual.

2. Mr. Porter (USAFE) brought up the fact that QC meetings need to be changed to preclude so many outside briefings and attendees. Mr. Warner stated his position that the meetings should also be structured with an agenda being published before the meeting.

A suggestion was made to use T-Net (Teleconferencing) to have meetings in the future.

3. Mr. Hotell reminded the group that although the members vote on certain issues, it is he that must carry this vote to the senior leadership. It was agreed that Mr. Hotell has the authority within the Council to veto decisions that will not be carried forward. He also stated that since AFCEA has been downsized, some of the projects currently being worked in his office will be sent back the MAJCOMs to sponsor.

4. The problem with WRM vehicles was discussed by the group - a study has shown that 75% of the fire vehicles in storage are out of service. Mr. Hotell directed that an Integrated Process Team be formed to look at the problem, with Mr. Caratachea as the chairman.

5. Mr. Morgan (AMC) addressed the problems we are experiencing with the live fire pits. The biggest problem is that there is no standardized fire pit, nor is there a standard on the emergency fuel shut off.

6. CMSgt Rausch (PACAF) discussed the problem of sending airmen overseas without the proper training. Specifically, CDC courses and certifications are not being completed before their rotation to an overseas assignment.

7. The role of the sub-committees was discussed. It was decided that they need to brief the QC at each meeting, although a hard copy status of what each committee is working on may suffice. It was also decided that the work of the HAZMAT and Safety Committees was finished and these sub-committees need to be abolished.

8. The issue of standardized bunkers was brought to the table. Some bases wanted to use structural gear for aircraft fire fighting, others were deploying with structural gear instead of silvers. A motion was made to state that silvers were the Air Force standard for aircraft fire fighting; passed.

9. A motion was made to study the feasibility of issuing bunkers at Goodfellow AFB, and then having fire fighters take their gear with them when the move from base to base; passed.

10. A motion was made to develop a Senior Officer's Course that would result in Fire Officer IV certification. This motion passed, although it is the Program Review Committee (PRC) that will have to ultimately authorize the development of this course.

11. The training committee was then tasked with looking at the 7-level course at Goodfellow AFB to see how many extra days would have to be added in order that Fire Officer I certification may be obtained by attendees.

12. A discussion was held about Silver Flag training - we need to look at whether or not fire fighters who have been deployed to the various contingencies still require this training.

13. Mr. Porter let everyone know that the Ramstein Fire School is willing to accept students from the other commands in their Rescue and HAZMAT schools.

Mission Support Plan

During the DoD Fire and Emergency Service Conference, fire chiefs and sub committee members were asked to address problems that are being encountered in the field. The Mission Support Plan is a document that is being worked at AFCESA and will be used to identify solutions. The following represent the issues identified during this conference.

IMPROVE TRAINING METHODS:

- Not all DoD firefighters are trained to the same skill (no baseline standard)
- No training to Fire Officer IV (no baseline standard)
- No recertification program (Refresher/requalification training)
- Self Study certification packages (on-time)
- Find a better way to deliver the CDC's (consolidate media and information)
- Enhance Proficiency Training (Virtual Reality)
- Focus on High Risk-Low Frequency resolutions
- Inadequate time for training -- better ways to teach more people in less time.
- Current Fire Training standards are too stringent (both self-imposed and NFPA)
- Need to relook at core functions and responsibilities and associated training
- Contingency training curriculum is inadequate.
- Set up Fire Chief's course @ Goodfellow - include mobility requirements
- EXPLOIT multi-media for real time
- No training assets for:
 - Fire Pits
 - Structural training facilities
 - Does not have all equipment for contingency HST
- ARC has lower training frequency availability than active duty
- EMS Certification -engage with DPC on Civilian Issue
- Fitness standards - enforcement for civilians

IMPROVE ENGINEER, EOD, DP AND FIREFIGHTING

CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT:

- Need a single firefighting ensemble (structural vs. silvers)
- Silvers (best standard) are not cost effective
 - Wearing out in crotch, knees & elbows
 - Fairchild has modified "patches" for silvers
- Central (lifetime) issue at Goodfellow
- Need near term ensemble replacement
- Need long term - revolutionary ensemble
- Expensive to maintain
- Heat stress/body cooling
- Non cut-through gloves Blood borne pathogens
- Improve a firefighter's ability to monitor his status
 - See the fire (improve visual and audio capability, IR)
 - Outside temperature
 - Environment -- oxygen deprived area
- Have WMP readdress war and MOOTW
- HAZMAT Detection or self-identifying methods.
- Improve on-scene SCBA Resupply capability
- Improve rescue/extrication tools/equip
- COTS CTE

INADEQUATE DEPLOYABLE COMMUNICATIONS AND DATA AUTOMATION SYSTEMS:

- Improve crew communications capability

- Wireless communications with base
- Lack of adequate communications under field conditions
- Automated Fire Dept Management System to include fire reporting to MAJCOM/NAVSACENT
 - Fire reporting system (DoD FIRS is existing system)
 - National Fire Incident Reporting system is an updated windows version of this program that needs to be evaluated.
 - Need to define total "management system" requirement
 - Both peacetime and contingency application
 - Need capabilities to communicate electronically with HQ and home station (to include e-mail)
- Improve vehicular communications
 - Laptops or HUD transfer of information electronically and/or hard copy
- Hands free two-way communications both audio and visual
- Vehicle and individual wireless locators

IMPROVE FIRE SUPPRESSION METHODS AND AGENTS:

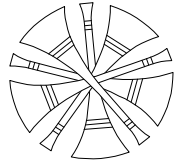
- Improve facility detection capability
 - upgradability and maintainability
- No approved "clean" agent (a/c engine damage) in halons, foams,
- Metal extinguishing agent
- Single agent to work on everything
- 1% versus 3% -- reduce storage/stockpile requirements
- Develop automatic metering capability for different agents
- Elevated delivery system - LFA fires
- Agent resupply
- Agent for composite materials

INADEQUATE CONTINGENCY AIRFIELD SUPPORT SYSTEMS:

- Improve/standardize mobility fire fighting capabilities/requirements
 - (2 CFR + 1 P-20 + deployment kit)
- Develop robotics fire fighting system
- Develop an effective WRM maintenance standard
 - No storage method that ensures wartime readiness of fire vehicles/equipment for readiness
- Tie Fire Protection requirements into facility and A/C, or systems designs
- Multi-use vehicles
 - structural/ARFF
 - rescue/structural
 - contingency operations
- All contingency vehicle must have an off-road capability
- Current deployable fire fighting systems require winterization kits or facilities
- Rapid water resupply system (peacetime & wartime, crash & structural)
- Storage, distribution & pumping
- Deployable detection & notification system for bare base operations (tent cities, etc.)
- Fixed base detection & suppression systems -- CE personnel inadequately training in system maintenance.
 - Current systems are manpower intensive to maintain
- Current airfield design does not compliment fire fighting methods (fire station locations, aircraft parking, maintenance facilities, POL storage & munitions storage.
- Fire protection requirements are not developed as part of the weapons systems R&D.
- Currently there is no investment strategy for replacement of equipment and vehicles and infrastructure to support fire fighting and fire suppression systems
- Current guidelines for safe and effective fire fighting/HAZMAT operations are too manpower intensive.
- UTC kits are inadequate?
- Arresting systems
 - Too many types of arresting systems
 - Some rewind operations are time intensive
 - Not all bases can support all aircraft
 - Current system cause major damage to airframe

Short Bursts

Fire Chiefs on the Move



The following individuals have been selected as Fire Chiefs at the locations indicated. I'm sure we are missing some folks, but we have to work with the

information that we receive:

Don Skeldum - Minot AFB

Ricky Grammar - Nellis AFB

Hoyt Sanders - Luke AFB

Bill Cannedy - Cheyenne Mountain AFB

Retirements

These folks have moved on to fishin' holes:

Walt Brown retired from his position as Chief of Fire Protection, Naitonal Guard Bureau.

Milt Puckett left Tyndall after 42 years in Air Force Fire - his work as a Fire Protection Specialist is well known (where will we send Halon Reports?).

A Bad Day ...

Fire Authorities in California found a corpse in a burnt out section of the forest while assessing the damage done by a forest fire. The deceased male was dressed in a full wetsuit, complete with a dive tank, flippers and face mask. An examination revealed that the person died not from burns but from massive internal injuries. Investigators began the arduous task of trying to figure out how a fully clad diver ended up in the middle of a forest fire. It was revealed that on the day of the fire, the person went for a diving trip off the coast - some 20 km away from the forest. The fire fighters, seeking to control the fire as soon as possible, called in a fleet of helicopters with very large buckets. The buckets were dropped into the ocean for rapid filling and then flown to the forest fire. You guessed it - one minute our diver was in the Pacific Ocean, the next he was flying in a fire bucket ...

Smile!

"As I grow older, I become more of a Marxist - Groucho that is. When you have lived two-thirds of your life, you know the value of a good joke." - Karen DeCrew

"He who laughs, lasts." - Mary Pettibone Poole

Gulf War Veterans

The Defense Department encourages physicians and others to call a special toll-free number to provide medical information about the causes of health problems, including reproductive health problems suffered by veterans of the Gulf War. Call 1-800-472-6719 or log on to DoD Gulf Link at <http://www.dtic.dla.mil/gulflink>.

WAPS study references

The 1996 Weighted Airman Promotion System Catalog, a list of study references for the 1997 staff, technical, master, senior master and chief master sergeant promotion testing cycles is being distributed to base and unit WAPS monitors. Those who can't wait for the hard copies can view an electronic version of the catalog on the AFPC World Wide Web home page:

<http://www.afpc.af.mil>

Air Force Home Page

One of the Internet's most popular home pages became an even faster source of news when Air Force officials revealed the first redesign of the official Air Force Home Page since it's introduction more than a year ago. The Air Force's official web site on the net: <http://www.af.mil> has incorporated new graphics, easier-to-use features and other changes as a result of customer suggestions. Topics on the page include news about the men and women of the Air Force, biographies of senior leadership, and photos of high tech aircraft!

Warning to Parents

A form of tattoo called "Blue Star" is being sold to school children. It is a small piece of paper containing a blue star. There are the size of a pencil eraser, and each star is soaked with LSD. (*Thanks to CMSgt Gene Rausch*)

Promotions!

New Master Sergeants



The long awaited Master Sergeant list came out - the following fire folks made the grade!

Arbnuckle, Donald M	Moody
Balderama, Albert D.	Hickam
Barth, Andrew M.	Goodfellow
Beach, Lance A.	Dover
Beaucamp, John M.	Misawa
Blackstone, David R.	
Branco, Mark S.	Andersen
Brown, Gary L	Misawa
Caley, Robert A. Jr	Goodfellow
Cunningham, David A.	Maxwell
Dalton, Eugene H.	D/M
Davis, Dwight J.	D/M
Ellis, Brian E.	Goodfellow
Gibbs, Moses III	Dover
Gillespie, Curtis W.	Andersen
Hawkins, Jeffery L.	Goodfellow
Holt, Robbin L.	Malstrom
Hook, Daniel E.	Ellsworth
Johnson, Kenneth E.	Goodfellow
Kelly, Steven D.	Osan
Larkin, Francis E. I.	Malstrom
LeFrancois, Robert	Maxwell
McDonald, Laurent R.	Mildenhall
Meadows, Mark A.	Howard
Moore, Xavier K.	Travis
Nusbaum, Steve M Sr	Barksdale
Packard, Stephen W.	Andrews
Parker, Nathaniel	Cape Cod
Pitman, Timothy J.	Langely
Quinby, Sean M.	Misawa
Rojo, Jose M.	Hill
Sampson, Jimme Jr	Eglin
Smith, Charles H.	Eglin
Sobota Arthur J. Jr	Hurlburt
Thompson, John M.	Kadena
Torres, Frank Jr	Holloman
Vancise, Daryl J.	Mildenhall
Vitarbo, Robert F.	Yokota
Ward, Robert F.	Goodfellow
Williams, Joseph J.	Brooks

Congratulations to all!

Thanks to **CMSgt Rausch** for being the first to provide the promotion information on this page!

New Technical Sergeants



This Technical Sergeant cycle was particularly good to fire folks. Congratulations to each of the new promotees:

Adams, Gerald A.	Dover	
Alonzo, Julian, Jr.	Keesler	
Amacker, Michael D	Dover	
Ashbury, Charles J. I	Maxwell	
Bohl, Gerald L, Sr.	Eglin	
Bouillon, Kevin D	Goodfellow	
Browning, James D	Hickam	
Bullard, Cletis E.	Cannon	
Campbell, Alan THurlbert		
Cole, Marcus E.	Pope	
Crookshanks, William	Spangdahlem	
Davis, Jimmy H., Jr.	Randolph	
Deguzman, Dean R.	Peterson	
Dibble, Monty J.	Dover	
Douglas, Jeffrey C.	Kunsan	
Duke, Mathew W.	Little Rock	
Eppley, Randy L.	Columbus	
Fitting, Raymond C.	Edwards	
Fitzpatrick, Randal	FE Warren	
Franks, Phillip T.	Goodfellow	
Garcia, Alvin T.	Little Rock	
Garland, Drexel T.	Goodfellow	
Garrison, Robert K.	Goodfellow	
Gregory, Richard C.	Langley	
Hader, Curt E.	Ramstein	
Harper, Eric B.	Lackland	
Hendershot, Jim L.J.	Mtn Home	
Hendrix, Joe W.	Shaw	
Heydt, Jeffrey P.	Ramstein	
Hilby, Dennis L.	Misawa	Pettit, Mark V. USAF Academy
Hinton, Donald B.	Ramstein	Powell, Richard Jr. Eglin
Holcomb, John M.	Mtn Home	Ridgeway, Irvin J. Vandenberg
Huttenlocker, Douglas	Goodfellow	Romain, Michael A. Mildenhall
James, Andrew	Barksdale	Rose, Medgar E. Spangdahlem
Jimmo, Keith W.	Mildenhall	Sanders, Keith A. Spangdahlem
Joe, Derrick	Lackland	Sheard, Noel S. Chievres
Jones, Darryl D.	Goodfellow	Slaughter, Brian M. Goodfellow
Lohrman, Anthony R.	Goodfellow	Smith, Grant R. Tyndall
Matthews, Ricky W.	Spangdahlem	Sprague, Kenneth A. Beale
McCargo, Roosevelt	Charleston	Sudduth, Scott B. Goodfellow
Miyasaki, Joseph L.	Minot	Tracey, Brian A. Eglin
Musselwhite, Donald	Goodfellow	Wade, Charles B. Maxwell
Nicholas, David A.	Andersen	Werner, Gerald E. Columbus
Peluso, John T.	Fairchild	Wilson, Eugene FE Warren
		Zanfagna, Ralph A. Columbus
		Zimmerman, Jonathan Ramstein

How To Get The Assignment You Always Wanted, Or So You Want To Come To Paradise?

As a Fire Protection Functional Manager, I have very little leeway when it comes to member's assignments and I do not think our fire fighters understand the EQUAL assignment system as well as they should. What I can do is help you understand and use the EQUAL assignment system. It's not rocket science--in order to be competitive for assignment locations, members must make certain decisions at specific times. Once the time sensitive window closes there are no reprieves. (There are provisions for requesting assignment actions as an "Exception to Policy", but these requests must be fully justified and be driven by hardships or unique mission requirements). Even these exceptions get more difficult as the assignment process moves forward. The time sensitive window, which I speak of, is your DEROS Option. For people on short tours this option comes ten months out from your DEROS and for long tours, the option comes thirteen months from your DEROS. This RIP must be completed and returned by the suspense date. MAJCOM and HQ AFPC make decisions (take actions to identify your replacement and/or counting you as available for reassignment) shortly after the suspense date for your DEROS option. For that reason, late requests will only be considered if Humanitarian or unique mission requirements exist. It's important that you understand all the options that may be available--you'll make a better decision. Let me discuss each of the options:

Maintain Original DEROS: If you select this option, you may compete during the overseas assignment cycle. If not selected for overseas, you will compete and match against a CONUS requirement. It is normally too late at this point to change your mind on your DEROS election. So, if you really want to remain overseas, this is not the best option. Please note that your Date of Separation (DOS) can have a direct impact on your current DEROS--if your DOS is within 12 months of your DEROS, see your Unit Orderly Room immediately to prevent an involuntary extension of DEROS. Also, keep in mind that in order to compete for an overseas assignment, you must be eligible to obtain the required service

retainability.

Indefinite DEROS Election: Requires commander's approval and allows you to remain at your current location beyond your original DEROS if you do not update any overseas preferences. If you have overseas preferences in the Personnel system, you are considered for reassignment on each overseas EQUAL cycle. Your Commander, MAJCOM, or HQ AFPC may establish a DEROS for personnel on an Indefinite DEROS. This would normally occur if your duty performance declines or if significant manning losses occur at your current location. Here are some points to consider: (1) Indefinite DEROS Election offers a better opportunity for those who have a desire for a specific overseas location or base and do not mind being flexible on when that assignment happens. (2) Personnel who have an established DEROS can compete for overseas requirements and are selected ahead of personnel on an Indefinite DEROS (as they are in a mandatory move status). Speaking of competition--it pays to know yours. The exact rules, called assignment priority, are covered in detail in AFI 36-2110, Table 7. This assignment priority applies to all overseas assignment selections--not just under the Indefinite DEROS Option. The short version is as follows: personnel who are presently assigned to a remote tour are given first priority. Personnel serving unaccompanied at a split tour location (like Guam) are given second priority. Personnel serving at a long tour location (unaccompanied or accompanied) or accompanied at a split tour location are given third priority. (3) It's important to remember that you must meet service retainability requirements. If your DEROS is within 12 months of your DOS, see the Military Personnel Flight, Career Enhancement Section for counseling immediately. (4) The Indefinite DEROS Election option is highly recommended if you strongly desire to compete for a Consecutive Overseas Tour (COT). **In Place Consecutive Overseas Tour (IPCOT):** This is a brand new tour of duty

at your current location and requires your commander's concurrence for approval and a curtailment of tour to shorten. MAJCOMs or HQ AFPC may disapprove based on manning at current location. IPCOTs offer incentives for travel entitlements. See your Orderly Room or Military Personnel Flight, for counseling.

Extension of Tour: You may extend your overseas tour in monthly increments up to (but not exceed) the length of a standard tour at your location. Please note, this is the opportune time to align your DEROS with the summer school break. When you extend during your DEROS option period, you are evaluated as part of the total manning requirement for the base. If you wait to extend at the end of your assignment, you will be caught up in the decisions already made to identify a replacement and provide you an assignment. Often these decisions are irrevocable without causing further hardship to other individuals/units. Also, don't forget the Overseas Tour Extension Incentive Program (OTEIP)--you may qualify depending upon your location if you extend in 12 month increments. Seek counseling on this program from your Orderly Room or the Military Personnel Flight, if you have questions.

Bottom line--if you fail to forecast for your future, there is no one to blame but yourself. When you are driving you must look past the hood of your car (future) and follow the rules of the road (EQUAL). Understanding EQUAL in no way guarantees you the assignment of your choice--it will lead to better decisions--decisions that you can be satisfied with. It's up to you to make sure that the decisions you make are informed and that your DEROS Option RIP is submitted on time. Again, late requests for DEROS extensions will be considered only if humanitarian or unique mission requirements exist.

As a reminder, MAJCOM functional managers just do not have time to handle personnel issues. Plus the majority of the personnel issues that come up are better handled at the base level. Watch the EQUALS and EQUAL PLUS listings, and I hope you get the assignment you want. Good luck.